

# A Phenomenological Analysis of the Views on Co-teaching Applications in the Inclusion Classroom

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## **Abstract**

It is necessary to provide students both with and without special needs and the classroom teachers with special education support services in order to achieve successful inclusion applications. The determination of teachers' opinions about the applications they carry out is important in the planning and achievement of the future applications. The purpose of this article which was designed as an action research was to analyze the opinions of special and general education teachers, working in inclusion classes based on co-teaching approach, about the preparation stage for the application, planning meetings and applications they carried out. Research participants were composed of a researcher who is a special education teacher, a classroom teacher and second grade students. In the scope of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher; planning meetings were arranged with the aim of preparing for the applications; and reflective daily data sources compiled by the researcher were utilized. The data were analyzed from a phenomenological perspective via inductive analysis. The findings were compared with those recorded in the related literature and were discussed. Consequently, classroom teacher voluntarily participated in the research process and stated that there was no problem about classroom applications. The teacher declared the importance of planning meetings, however, did not allocate sufficient time for meetings and did not give details about the lessons. Therefore, ambiguities were recorded lesson applications about the role and responsibilities of teachers. The teacher stated that all co-teaching approaches can be applied in inclusion classes however stated that these applications were not so new for her and this process could not have any contributions to her.

## **Key Words**

Inclusion, Student With Special Needs, Special Education Support Services, Co-Teaching, Action Research.

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Most crucial factors for successful inclusion applications are underlined to be academic success and social skill levels of student with special needs, the number of students in the class, the attitude and experience of the classroom teacher and -maybe the most importantly- the special education support services (Baker & Zigmond, 1995; Friend & Reising, 1993; Gately & Gately, 2001; Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001; Salend & Duhaney, 1999; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000).

Despite the laws and regulations implemented in Turkey regarding performance of inclusion applications duly, it is stated by the studies that the most important problem pertaining to inclusion is the failure to provide adequate special education support services (Akdemir-Okta 2008; Batu, 1998; Diken, 1998; Eripek, 2000; Kargin, Acarlar & Sucuoglu, 2005; Sucuoglu, 2004).

Special education support services possible to be provided in the scope of inclusion are classified as resource room, special education counseling and co-teaching (Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000; Murawski, 2005; Santamaria & Thousand, 2004; Zigmond, 2001; Zigmond & Magiera, 2001). Co-teaching is defined as the cooperation of general and special education teachers in the same classroom environment through sharing of planning, application, and evaluation responsibilities (Friend & Cook, 2003; Friend & Reising, 1993; Murawski, 2005; Vaughn, Schumm & Arguelles, 1997; Villa, Thousand & Nevin, 2004; Walther-Thomas & Bryant, 1996).

The classification devised by Cook and Friend (1995) with regard to the models of co-teaching approaches is widely accepted and has a large usage area. The models proposed by this definition are: (1) One teach/one assist (or drift), (2) station teaching, (3) parallel teaching, (4) alternative teaching, and (5) team teaching.

Related literature focused on teacher opinions underline that co-teaching approach supports professional development of students. It is determined that special education teachers need additional information regarding the general education program and more time for planning. It is found that special education teachers have more contact with students with special needs (Antia, 1999; Austin, 2001; Buckley, 2004; Indrisano & Bimiham, 1999; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Salend & Johansen, 1997; Wood, 1998).

Despite its crucial importance, only few studies have been conducted on this issue in Turkey (Akcamete, Kis & Gurgur, 2004; Gurgur, 2008; Kircaali - İftar & Uysal, 1999; Sucuoglu, 2005).

It is essential that special education support service approaches applicable to Turkish conditions should be planned and implemented. Particularly considering the fact that in the 2007-2008 academic year the Ministry of National Education placed 67.756 students with special needs (Ministry of National Education, 2008) attending at 36.156 primary schools in 81 cities of Turkey in inclusion application, it is realized that studies on the applicable special education support services should be conducted immediately. Thus, the purpose of this article was to phenomenologically analyze the opinions of special and general education teachers regarding the applications they carry out in the inclusion class where the co-teaching approach is implemented. To this end, the following questions were asked:

- 1) What were the opinions of the teachers at the stage of preparation for the application?
- 2) What were the opinions of the teachers about planning meetings?
- 3) What were the opinions of the teachers about the applications carried out?

### **Method**

This research was designed as an action research with the aim of systematically implementing co-teaching approach for the first time and therefore obtaining functional information (Johnson, 2002; Mills, 2003).

### **Setting**

The research was conducted in a school certified by the Ministry of National Education and located at a low socio economic neighbourhood of Ankara.

### **Participants**

The names of the research participants were changed for confidentiality purposes.

**The Regular Education Teacher Mrs. Gul:** Mrs. Gul was a classroom teacher with an 18-year professional experience, who graduated from a teacher's training school. She had no experience relating to inclusion applications except for her participation in an in-service training course on the topic "special education." Mrs. Gul had the responsibility for the whole class during the process.

**The Researcher - Special Education Teacher:** The researcher graduated from Anadolu University, Department of Special Education Program, Division of Education of the Hearing Impaired. His role in the process was to collect data and guide the teacher in the analysis of the data as well as being the special education teacher.

**Classroom Students:** Second grade students from the first level of primary education participated in the research. There were 22 females and 13 males, a total of 35 students.

**The Focused Mainstreamed Students:** Ayla was from Ankara and 9 years old. She was diagnosed with hearing impairment and cerebral palsy. Burak was from Ankara and 9 years old, he was included in the research by his teachers because of his low academic success.

**The Trustworthiness Committee:** The committee included four college professors specializing in the area of special education. In the scope of the research, the roles of the committee members were to observe the data collection process and provide guidance.

### Research Cycle

Steps were cyclical in the research process; therefore, when deemed necessary, it was possible to return to and repeat a step. In the first step, data were collected to prepare for the teaching applications. The second step was the application process. Planned lessons were implemented two days a week. While co-planning meetings were held each week before the applications of the lesson, reflection meetings were conducted after the applications. The application process lasted for 12 weeks, and 25 co-teaching lessons were implemented in this process. In the application process, the trustworthiness committee met, on average, every three weeks. Re-evaluation was carried out in the last step.

## Data Collection Techniques

In the scope of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher; planning meetings were arranged with the aim of preparing for the applications; and reflective daily data sources compiled by the researcher were utilized (Johnson, 2002; Uzuner, 2007; Yildirim & Simsek, 2005).

## Data Analysis

The first and final semi-structured interviews were carried out with the teacher, and preparation meetings for the application and audio recordings from the co-planning were transcribed. Reliability and validity of the audio recording transcriptions were ensured by the authors.

The data were analyzed from a phenomenological perspective in the form of induction with the aim of increasing the awareness relating to the opinions of the teachers and ensuring in-depth view (Creswell, 2004; Kus, 2003; Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). Events arising within the research were handled as a whole and the phenomena, which refer to perceivable aspects of the events ([www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)), were analyzed. Having received all transcriptions separately, themes and sub-themes were constituted and then compared until an agreement was reached. Finally, the findings were reported.

## Results

### Opinions about the preparation stage for the application

**Opinions about Voluntary Participation:** The special education teacher determined criteria pertaining to the class in which the research would be conducted, in accordance with literature and the purposes of the research. Particularly the fact that the teacher voluntarily took part in the research was taken into consideration at this stage since it is mentioned in the literature (Austin 2001; Buckley, 2004; Thompson, 2001; Trent, 1998).

Special education teacher made the following statement on this issue; "...I found a school which is appropriate to the criteria; first, the classroom teacher expressed in the pre-interview that she was voluntary." (*Researcher's diary*, 01.12.2003, page 1).

### Opinions of the Classroom Teacher about her own Applications:

The teacher mentioned her opinions relating to the applications as follows: "Generally, I think everything is fine with my students, I do not

experience any deficiency in terms of teaching my children; I can teach them.” (*Audio recording*, 10.12.2003). In a similar way, Buckley (2004) has mentioned that general education teachers think they give proper education to all students.

**Opinions about Expectations from the Research:** The classroom teacher listed her expectations from the research as follows: “I do not understand anything from what Ayla says.” “... now, you have come as a surprise, I do not have much expectation of you, as well... I think that I will explain and you will re-organize it at Ayla’s level.” (*Audio recording*, 10.12.2003). It is mentioned in the literature that general education teachers think that students with special needs are under the responsibility of special education teachers in the inclusion class (Antia, 1999; Bessette, 1999; Buckley, 2004; Rice & Zigmund, 2000; Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007; Trent, 1998).

The special education teacher expressed his opinion about the class teacher’s statements as follows: “I think the teacher has only that much expectation from the application. Her opinions will probably change when she is informed more during the process.” (*Researcher’s diary*, 10.12.2003, page 9). The reason for the low-level expectation of the teacher was thought to be her insufficient knowledge about the co-teaching approach, and the teacher was given the booklet “Co-Teaching Approach.” Moreover, only two successive planning meetings were arranged before the applications. According to the literature (Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Salend & Johansen, 1997), it is important for teachers to share their expectations; and that it is possible to avoid conflicts that could arise during the process by this way.

**Opinions of Informing the Classroom Teacher about the Research Process:** The first question that the special education teacher asked in these meetings was: “Were you able to read the booklet I gave to you?” (*Audio recording*, 10.12.2003). The teacher’s answer was as follows: “Which booklet? ... presumably, I did not read it”. It is stressed that teachers who will implement co-teaching approach must receive in-service training (Mastropieri, Scruggs, Graetz, Norland, Gardizi, & McDuffie 2005; Walther-Thomas, 1997). It is emphasized in the literature that co-teaching approach ensures professional development in both the design of the research and the implemented cooperation, and that the process can initially be called in-service training (Johnson, 2002; Walther-Thomas, 1997). At this point, it is thought that the question to

bring an explanation to “in-service training” concept should be: “Why did not teacher read this booklet which is important for preparation for the application to be carried out even though she participated in the research voluntarily?” This question can be answered via the life cycle “intention-knowledge-skill-action and result” introduced by Cuceloglu (2008). The teacher participated in the research voluntarily, but did not read the booklet and there are two concepts which explain the relationship between the intention and knowledge (Cuceloglu, 2008). In other words, there is an inconsistency between the intention of the teacher and her effort to obtain the necessary knowledge to achieve her intention.

As mentioned by Cuceloglu, the other important concept is the system of construing: individuals understand an event in different ways due to the difference in their background. Accordingly, it is an important factor that the backgrounds of special education teachers and classroom teachers and the cultures in which they live and work are different (Cuceloglu, 2008; Eren, 2005; Guler, 2004).

### **Opinions about Co-Planning Meetings**

As stated above, planning meetings are important for success in co-teaching approach (Murawski, 2005; Walther-Thomas & Bryant, 1996). The teacher expresses her opinion about the planning as follows: “Of course, if there are two teachers in the class, they must have a plan to follow. I do not think that the success will be achieved in a class where the teachers have no plan. Teachers should know what to do so that they can enter into this class and teach the lesson.” (*Audio recording*, 10.12.2003).

Following benefits were provided thanks to the efforts exerted by the classroom teacher in the process: training materials, co-teaching model to be implemented and lesson assessment methods were decided in the content and target of each lesson. In the scope of the research, conducted with regard to the co-teaching approach, planning meetings were stated to be important to clearly determine the roles and responsibilities (Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Welch, 2000; Wood, 1998).

**Opinions about the Problems which Occurred during the Co-Planning Meetings:** Generally, the teacher was not able to allocate enough time for planning meetings. On this matter, special education

teacher said: "... we had thought 12.30 would be appropriate for the meeting, but the teacher came late; therefore, we talked about the plans in the next break. We did not go into the details in the planning." It is stated in the literature that minimum 30 minutes must be allocated for planning each week (Curtin, 1998; Dieker, 2001; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Welch, 2000). Meetings lasted only for 8 minutes, on average. This was challenging for the current research.

The teacher mentioned the reasons for not allocating sufficient time for planning as follows: "...I need to take care of my own children and I have to take them out early to attend these meetings." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). She said that she allocated sufficient time and made the following explanation: "I wanted to keep all things on track ... I made a sacrifice." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). The teacher's definition of "self-sacrifice" is different from that of the special education teacher and from the definition in the literature. The special education teacher defines sacrifice as synonymous with abnegation in parallel with the literature ([www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)). According to this, sacrifice is defined as giving up your self-interests for a purpose which you want to achieve. The teacher said that she made a sacrifice, but the fact that she came to meetings late despite all the warnings in the process is a contradiction. In the literature, it is stated that allocating time for planning meetings is the most important problem in application of the approach (Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Welch, 2000). The special education teacher tried to lengthen the duration of the meetings, but the class teacher showed just a little progress in this scope. This may have resulted from teacher's not regarding the situation as a problem.

That the teacher utilized ready-made daily plans while planning the teaching brought certain problems. The special education teacher said: "The teacher went to take her plans at the end of the meeting, but then she came and said that she did not have new plans." (*Researcher's diary*, 05.03.2004, page 81)

The teacher could not give clear information since she was using ready-made plans. The timing problem in the meetings and the use of ready-made plans sometimes stalemated the special education teacher. Special education teacher said: "The teacher told me: 'Mr. Ali, I will have the students watch a cartoon in the first class next week; but if this is not possible, I will tell the students to watch it at home; and I will ask them to explain it in the class.' I asked: 'Which cartoon film will they watch?' and



she said: 'It is not clear yet.' (*Researcher's diary*, 13.02.2004, Page 62). This situation caused problems in answering the following questions; "The questions which are in my mind: 'What is the content of the lessons on Tuesday and Thursday', 'Which co-teaching models will be used', 'What kind of materials will be used?', 'What are the teaching methods to be used in the lessons (*Researcher's diary*, 05.03.2004, page 82).

The teacher changed the decisions made in the planning meetings since she used ready-made plans and experienced problems in obtaining these plans. In this matter, the special education teacher said: "The teacher said that she changed the content of the lesson to be taught on Wednesday and Thursday, and told me to change the teaching plan accordingly" (*Researcher's diary*, 10.02.2004, page 56).

The teacher mentioned no problem pertaining to ready-made plans. On the contrary, she defended the ready-made plans and said: "... you demanded a plan from me four or five days ago, and this is not an easy task. You go home this evening, and you write a plan for tomorrow... we benefit from the technology, if there were not this technology I could not be able to give them to you." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). With regard to the problems, the special education teacher experienced in the process, Murawski and Dieker (2008) stated that each co-teaching teacher complained about being dependent on the other for plans and teaching.

During the application process, the teacher made changes in the content of the lessons which had been planned together with the other teacher beforehand, and acted against the agreed roles and responsibilities. Thus, there were problems experienced in the communication between the teachers and it is stressed that this could be the main source of the problems experienced in the co-teaching process (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Regarding the life cycle proposed by Cuceloglu (2008) for planning meetings; it is seen that even though the teacher believes in and expresses the necessity of planning, there is a disharmony in the knowledge-skill-action-result cycle with the intention. Another important aspect of maintaining harmony in the cycle is the respect the teachers have for each other. It appears in this study that the classroom teacher did not respect the special education teacher and therefore did not mention the changes in the plan. In order to explain this situation, it is necessary to touch upon the concept of authority in the culture of fear (Cuce-

loglu, 2008; Erdem, 2007; Eren, 2005; Guler, 2004). Since the classroom teacher did not see the special education teacher as an authority, she did not feel any obligation to make a plan to be implemented in the classroom. Accordingly, she has a document named “plan” and the purpose of the plan is not necessity but the demand from an authority (Guler, 2004).

### **Opinions about Applications Carried Out**

It was determined that classroom teacher enabled students to participate in the lesson actively and gave concrete feedback in the applications during the process. An increase was observed in the success of the students during the process. The literature refers to the fact that students gain academic successes and social skills from the co-teaching process (Austin, 2001; Indrisano & Bimiham, 1999; Rice & Zigmond, 2000).

**Opinions about the Teacher’s Responsibilities:** In the present study, there were certain problems experienced in the process. First, the teacher did not want to relinquish control of the class. Powerful individuals in the culture of fear are not open to innovation and thus create barriers against the development because they fear they will lose their power (Cuceloglu, 2008; Erdem, 2007; Eren, 2005; Guler, 2004). In this matter, special education teacher said: “... a problem I consider as important is that the teacher cannot withdraw somehow during the lesson.” (*Researcher’s diary*, 06.04.2004, page 115). Although the classroom teacher made no comment on this issue, her behavior can be very clearly seen in the video recordings. The literature supports the idea that classroom teachers have a tendency to retain primary responsibilities in the class (Austin, 2001; Jimenez-Sanchez & Antia, 1999; Lockledge & Wright, 1991; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Norris, 1997; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). Thus, this situation could cause special education teacher to be seen as a visitor in the class (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995; Dieker, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000). Both teachers must establish an open communication regarding their roles and responsibilities (Keefe & Moore, 2004; Trump & Hange, 1996). In the current research, in spite of all the efforts of the special education teacher to establish effective communication, the duration of planning meetings could not be lengthened. This situation was the reason behind all problems and also prevented establishment of effective communication.

**Opinions about the Applied Co-Teaching Models:** With regard to the models of co-teaching approach, the teacher said: “I cannot say that this or that one was effective since some of them have advantages, and some of them have disadvantages... It changes according to the lesson and program at that time, therefore it cannot be said that the most effective one was this, or the most ineffective one was that ...” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004).

The special education teacher said with regard to the one leader/one assistant model: “... In this model, the teacher is leader, but there is nothing I can do as an assistant teacher since the teacher speaks, and I have to listen to him/her like a child.” (*Researcher’s diary*, 10.02.2004, page 56). It is stressed that teachers newly implementing the co-teaching approach mostly use the model of one leader and one assistant (Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). The reason for this choice was that it seemed to be the solution to the problem of the lack of adequate planning. However, this solution resulted in the special education teacher becoming the assistant teacher. This is supported in the literature where insufficient planning may lead special education teacher to be the assistant of the general education teacher in the class where co-teaching approach is implemented (Dettmer, Thurston & Dyck, 2005; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Mastropieri et al., 2005). This situation can also be explained in terms of a powerful individual and authority in the culture of fear. A person who has the authority performs his/her work by disregarding the other person who feels inferior, where the former shows no respect to the latter and ignores his/her contribution (Cuceloglu, 2008; Erdem, 2007; Eren, 2005; Guler, 2004).

With regard to the alternative teaching model, the teacher said: “... You were sitting in a corner in the class. I was not in favor of that... It would be better if they were seated among the other students. Because in this model, they may have felt that they were seated separately from the class since they were disabled or handicapped.” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). The special education teacher responded “I was disturbed by the teacher’s loud voice and the noise in the class, which I had not noticed before. In addition, the students around us tried to watch what we were doing and distracted me as well as Burak and Ayla.” (*Researcher’s diary*, 02.03.2004, page 77). It is stressed that even though alternative teaching model provides advantages such as enabling individual needs to be met and ensuring face to face interaction (Villa et al., 2004), it

must be planned carefully so as not to lead to stigmatization. Parallel to this, this model must be implemented not only for the students with special needs but also for the other students who could have different needs in the class (Friend, 2004). Alternative teaching was also implemented on the students who had needs in different fields with the approval of trustworthiness committee. Nevertheless, the negative view of the teacher continued. The classroom teacher did not pay attention to the level of the voice she made during the lesson. The reason for this could be explained by the fact that teacher did neither want to allow the implementation of any application out of her control nor to lose her authority over the class. It is mentioned in the literature that it will be appropriate for alternative teaching to be implemented by the teachers who work together well and who are used to working with each another (Villa et al., 2004). Accordingly, another reason for the problems in the alternative teaching model could stem from the fact that teachers still cannot work harmoniously with one another.

The teacher said with regard to the team teaching: “It was fairly good that I covered the topic, and then you showed the answers?” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). In addition, she mentioned: “It is certain that such an implementation, increase in the number of the materials, existence of a second teacher and a different voice of expression in the class is a good method ...” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004).

With regard to the co-learning teaching method, the teacher said: “... it was a different environment and experience for the students; it was not a bad experience. It was a good thing that the implementation was based on cooperation.” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). On the other hand, she did not see this method as new and said: “We teach our topic in co-teaching, which is something we normally do. We did not notice any difference in this scope...” (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004).

**Opinions about Teachers’ Burn Out:** The special education teacher implied that he felt weary with the process: “The teacher said in one of her comments during the lesson that they used to make those kinds of implementations in the past, but when inspectors asked knowledge-based questions they returned to rote-learning. I thought to myself why I was making an effort as she was already doing everything.” (*Researcher’s diary*, 04.03.2004, page 80) The literature refers to the characteristics of the culture of fear resulting in individuals not taking any responsibility, and attributing the cause of a fault to different individuals and events

(Cuceloglu, 2008; Eren, 2005). The teacher put the blame of not implementing co-teaching method on the inspectors. It is mentioned that individuals work only as much as necessary and do not give of their best in the culture of fear (Cuceloglu, 2008; Erdem, 2007; Guler, 2004). On the other hand, power of the authority is seen clearly in the expressions of the teacher. She mentioned that she did not use a method which she considers to be beneficial since inspectors asked for rote learning. She did this either because she wished to be considered to be a good teacher in the eyes of the inspectors or she wanted to get a good note in her teaching registration file.

The special education teacher gave his opinion about the teacher's unwillingness to participate "Recently, she has started to say again and again via joke that she was bored with the video recordings in the teachers' room." (*Researcher's diary*, 25.03.2004, page 103) and a friend of her said: "She is making fun of course, but there is some truth in her words. Mr. Ali, Mrs. Gul says, she feels relieved and released when you leave and she is bored with it." While her friend was making these statements, Mrs. Gul was laughing at her friend and saying "Stop it or Mr. Ali will believe you now". I could not find the right words to respond, I remained silent." (*Researcher's diary*, 18.05.2004, page 156). The special education teacher tried to achieve a life cycle at the beginning of the research. As for the teacher; even though she was voluntary, she was resistant, refusing even the information of co-teaching offered at the beginning of the research.

**Opinions about Reflection Meetings:** With regard to the reflection meetings, the teacher said: "It was good in the sense that we could see what we had done. The evaluation of the week was made at length." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). In a way supporting this finding, it is stressed in the literature that it is important for teachers to evaluate all implementations in the class (McCrory-Cole & Mc Leksey, 1997; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Welch, 2000).

**Opinions about the Classroom Teacher's Exceptions:** With regard to the expectations at the end of the research process, the teacher said: "... since I could predict the children's problems, I had no expectations of you." and "... I said 'let's go through the experience and see the process; let's understand whatever happens at the end'... If I had an expectation I would say it wasn't realized; however I think it was a comfortable and positive process." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). This is important

evidence of the narrowness of teacher's expectations and the fact that teacher participated in the research voluntarily with the hope that the special education came just to deal with inclusion student and in that way her burden would be lessened.

**Opinions about Contributions of the Research Process:** When asked about the contributions of the process, the teacher said: "... The process was not really unknown to me since these were the activities we had been doing for years. I did not observe big developments which can be called contribution..." and "...I was not a different teacher in the class... I already used to act in that way; but, I did not want to reject your trials since I looked at this situation positively." (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). One of the reasons for the teacher's opinion may be the fact that information meetings at the beginning of the process were not effective; and communication problems were experienced. Another reason could be that the teachers may not have adequately shared their viewpoints and expectations. Research indicated that teachers gain nothing from cooperation if they do not share their philosophical differences, education styles and experiences (Austin, 2001; Boudah, Schumacher & Deshler, 1997; Dieker, 2001; Karge, Lasky, McCabe & Robb, 1995; Marks & Gersten, 1998). In that case, it could be said that it is normal for teacher to think that the process did not make any contribution to her teaching experience.

The teacher explained the contribution of the research to the special education teacher as follows: "... It is probation for you to be in our class. It is an experience for you to teach different groups. If you go to another class for a research again, you will not find it as much difficult as this implementation (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). It is seen that the teacher thinks the process was only of benefit to the special education teacher, but not to her personal development and that she ignores other developments. She states that she is the powerful one by saying the process made no contribution to her rather than saying 'you are important for me' or 'my horizon and knowledge have enlarged as a result of my involvement in the study you have conducted' and she reinforces her authority by referring to the special education teacher as a probationer. At this point, these questions can be asked: "Would the teacher behave or speak in that way if her personnel registration note was going to be given on the basis of the studies which the researcher -as special education teacher - made?" It is certain that she would have to see the special education teacher as an authority and would not speak in that way as a requirement of the culture of fear.

### **Opinions of other Teachers in the School about the Research**

**Process:** With regard to the opinions of other teachers in the school; teacher said: "...they told me that teaching a class while being videoed was very difficult. Other than that, few comments - positive or negative- were made. They thought you were doing a doctorate. From my point of view, they said that I helped you a lot. Everyone knows no one looks positively at this point" (*Audio recording*, 01.08.2004). Murawski and Dieker (2008) suggest other teachers in the school should be informed about the application of co-teaching. They were informed in this scope but it did not provide so much benefit. Furthermore, considering the process only as the completion of a doctorate study is another heartbreaking point. As a special education teacher, the researcher could have not taken part in the process as a teacher initially, and could have easily received his doctorate degree through a different research project requiring a couple of questionnaires prepared in his own office. However, the researcher wanted to conduct the research with the aim of eliminating a deficiency he detected during his studies and past experiences, and tried to harmonize knowledge-skill-action-result cycle pertaining to this intention. In this scope, the special education teacher said: "It is certain that she is right in one aspect, but one of my purposes in the research was to give support to her in good faith. In my opinion, this is a general viewpoint in public schools. It is because of the fact that in another research, most of the teachers said particularly for those who prepared their theses in that school 'they are preparing their theses thanks to us', and did not want to support them to a great degree."

In general, the reason for the unsuccessful situations experienced in the process could be explained from the dissimilarity in the way the teachers' construed the systems, and therefore with the concepts of culture of fear (Cuceloglu, 2008; Erdem, 2007; Eren, 2005; Guler, 2004). In the dimension of intention-knowledge-skill-action-result lifecycle; generalization of the fact that teachers pretend to have very idealistic intentions in such studies has revealed many evidence showing that teachers pretend to behave as if they adopted very different teaching styles and methods. Here, it is necessary to strongly emphasize that no accusation is being made, and that the purpose is not to focus on the classroom teacher's faults. The intention is to analyze the reasons of teacher's behaviors by using her expressions. It should not be ignored that such behaviors are not experienced or seen only in public schools but also in

the environments where academic research are conducted. The reasons why special education support services - one of the most fundamental factors- have not been implemented even though inclusion applications have existed for many years in Turkey can be understood from this research. Then, how have these experiences in the research process affected the inclusion and the co-teaching approach implemented in inclusion classes? In fact, it is possible to find the answer to this question in findings and discussion section. It is probable that it will be appropriate to answer this question with a question: Is it possible that inclusion intention has been internalized in such a class environment where everything pretends to seem different than the actual?; or is it possible that two teachers could work in cooperation to increase the quality of education in an environment where everyone pretends to behave different than the actual?

### **Results**

Individuals' perceptions, ways of construing systems, opinions, intentions, and attitudes influence the successful application of a program. A couple of concepts come to the forefront among the findings presented in the research. These are life cycle, pure intention, authority, construing systems, effective communication, the sense of self-sacrifice and responsibility, minding/respecting individuals, resistance to learning, and planned teaching. Disharmony between some or all of these concepts negatively affects the ability of the teachers -who have different personalities and come from different cultural environments- to cooperate (Friend & Cook, 2003). For such a process to be implemented effectively, individuals must initially try to understand the way in which others construe systems.

While the cyclical and reflective feature of action research allowed the taking of people's opinions into account in this research, the establishment of basic confidence, sense of self-sacrifice and responsibility, respect, empathy and openness to learning -which are necessary for an effective communication- could be enriched through different applications.

General education and special education teachers must receive training on issues such as inclusion, special education support services and cooperative skills. The class environment must be arranged, teaching equip-



ment and teaching staff must be provided for qualified co-teaching applications. Teachers implementing a co-teaching approach must have time to allocate for co-planning and reflection meetings.

This research can be implemented in another inclusion class. Also the influences of co-planning and reflection meetings on student performances can be analyzed. Teacher-student interaction in the inclusion class where a co-teaching approach is implemented can be examined. Experimental research can be designed so as to determine the relationships between different variables.

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